
**Abstract**

The aims of this study were to evaluate four preventive measures and two curative treatments of tail biting. The preventive measures were: chain, rubber hose, straw rack (5 g/pig/day) and the provision of straw on the floor twice daily by hand (2 - 10 g/pig/day). The two curative treatments, which were applied following the onset of tail biting in a pen were: straw twice daily (as in the fourth preventive measure) and the removal of the biter. In total, 960 undocked weaned piglets (10 piglets per pen) were observed during 5 weeks. Tail lesions (none, bite marks and wounds) were recorded daily. The incidence of pens with wounded pig tails was significantly lower when straw was provided twice daily (8% of pens) compared to the chain (58% of pens) and rubber hose (54% of pens) treatment, but did not differ significantly from the straw rack treatment (29% of pens). Tails with bite marks were significantly less common in pens with twice daily straw (16% of pens) compared to chain (88% of pens), rubber hose (79% of pens) and straw rack (75% of pens). No significant difference was found between the curative treatments. Both treatments showed a reduced incidence of red fresh blood on the tails at days 1–9 following curative treatment, compared to day 0. However, neither curative treatment eliminated tail biting entirely. In conclusion, this study indicates that tail biting is best prevented with a small amount of straw, provided twice daily, and to a lesser extent with a straw rack, compared to providing a chain or a rubber hose. Once tail biting has occurred, providing a small amount of straw twice daily and removing the biter appears to be equally effective.

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